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Prolegomena to an edition of the works of Decimus Magnus Ausonius, by Sister MARIE JOSÉ BYRNE. New York: Columbia University Press, 1916. Pp. vii + 101. \$1.25.

It would be easy to criticize this monograph, and the criticism would be entirely favorable, if the work had been called by any other name than *Prolegomena*. The real difficulty with the title of *Prolegomena*, especially at this stage of the author's studies, is illustrated and exemplified by my first attempt some years ago to use a certain academic library in a far country. I found that the shelf devoted to Dante contained only one book. That was a large and sumptuous Concordance to his complete works. During the next few days I had occasion several times to be impressed with the fact that, on the whole, Dante did not need the Concordance so much as the Concordance needed Dante. A somewhat similar relation exists between *Prolegomena* and the author with whom they are concerned.

The relation is such that in the present instance, for example, definite criticism is impossible unless we had the proposed edition before us. Let us hope that the editor intends to furnish that edition with a commentary. The work she has already done indicates that she would furnish a good one. And speaking in general there is nothing which a large share of the Greek and Latin classics need so much as a thorough and complete modern commentary. To my thinking it is just this kind of work which will do more than anything else to rouse a really living and profitable interest in those authors.

The most satisfactory and interesting portion of this article is that which is concerned with the poet's life, his friends, and his works. Professor Byrne has given a remarkably clear and vivid picture of Ausonius and of the times in which he lived. A strange age, the fourth century. The old was still surviving, though perhaps more in appearance than in reality. On the other hand, the new was still not altogether sure of itself, not altogether acceptable to every class in life.

Ausonius belonged intellectually and temperamentally to the old régime. It was a régime which had long since ceased to lead an active life in anything but phrases. But Ausonius was a man of phrases. He lived, moved and had his being in phrases. Happy for him that he lived in an age when there were at least a few men left who knew a good phrase when they heard it. Happy for him, too, that he died before the campaign of frightfulness under Alaric and the Teutons roused 'modern civilization', as no doubt it called itself, to the fact that it is neither so safe nor so powerful and persuasive as it fancies itself to be. The year 410 was not a good year for phrases. Still, after he

had recovered from the shock of it, Ausonius would no doubt have gone back to his phrases again and been quite as happy as before, so long as he remained unmolested. Few men have been so fortunate. He had a long and pleasant life, he was famous in his own time, he was famous for a long time afterwards, indeed, it is scarcely a century since he ceased to be generally read. He was one of those poets, who though certainly second rate possessed the rare gift of inspiring greater minds than his own. We cannot afford to ignore the man who suggested Herrick's 'Gather ye rose buds while ye may' and many another charming bit of verse by which the first three centuries of modern literature are remembered.

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Syria as a Roman Province. By E. S. BOUCHIER. Pp. I-XI, 1-304. Plate of Coins. Map. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1916.

The reviser of Arnold's "Roman System of Provincial Administration" has again laid scholars under obligation by a specialized study of a Roman province. "Syria as a Roman Province" has the same general characteristics as the preceding volumes, "Life and Letters in Roman Africa" and "Spain under the Roman Empire". All three are informing, learned, and unassuming. We are fortunate to have them so well done in English.

The first chapter on the peoples and national characteristics of Syria and the second on the history and constitution of the province to the Antonine age, pass the subject in rapid review. The more detailed treatment of the succeeding chapters affords a better illustration of Mr. Bouchier's special fitness for this work, which has grown out of his apprenticeship on Arnold's book. The chapters on Antioch and Palmyra will interest the general reader. The Syrian dynasties at Rome (Chapter IV) find their proper setting in this volume, and Elagabalus appears here less a monster of iniquity than his biographers are accustomed to make him. Berytus, Damascus, Apamea, and other chief cities of Syria take on new interest and fall more into the scheme of things in the hands of Mr. Bouchier. The economic side is not neglected, but the chapters on the culture of the province, its literature, religion, architecture and the arts, occupying the last hundred pages of the book, are, perhaps